DIVISION OF COMMUNICATIONS AND RECORDS
TELEGRAPH BRANCH

DEPARTMENT OF STATE

INCOMING TELEGRAM

File Expire

ACTION COPY

EXCISE

SECRET

Action: EUR

Info:
SS
G
P
OLI
CIA
AAM
IE
DCR

Control 6605

Rec'd March 14, 1950
7:58 p.m.

FROM: Brussels

TO: Secretary of State

NO: 397, March 14, 5 p.m.

Last night [redacted] gave B-1
Embassy political officer following views on current crisis over royal question.

1. ~~As is obvious to all, Liberals are key to solution of problem. Their heavy responsibility in this regard is source of keen embarrassment and soul-searching in party, since upon their decision on royal question may depend existence of party in future.~~ Liberal ranks are badly divided on issue of King's abdication or return. Although two and perhaps three Liberal Ministers of Walloon origin and representation (cf. paragraph 3, EMBTEL 389 March 13) favor Leopold's abdication, [redacted] Flemish Ministers, also three in number would of necessity, because of their constituents support of King, insist on his return. Liberal Party because of this duality of representation and opinion is notorious for its lack of discipline and probable outcome will be usual decision not to decide: to give each Liberal deputy, Senator and Minister freedom to vote according to his own conscience.

2. If this should happen, it would be technically possible for PSC, and those Liberals who favor King, to muster sufficient majority in Parliament to rescind law of July 19, 1945. If this does not occur shortly [redacted] there was no alternative to general election and expressed confidence that in such an election PSC stood to gain. However, present narrow margin favoring King in popular

755.00/3-1450

SECRET FILE

DEPARTMENT OF STATE A/CDC/MR

REVIEWED BY J.L. Smith DATE NOV 19 1982 SECRET

RDS☐or XDS☐EXT. DATE
TS AUTH: REASON(S) 1.3(a)(3)
ENDORSE EXISTING MARKINGS ☐ 1.3(a)(9)
DECLASSIFIED☐ RELEASABLE☐
RELEASE DENIED☒ IN PART
PA or FOI EXEMPTIONS B-1

THIS COPY MUST BE RETURNED TO DC/R CENTRAL FILES WITH NOTATION OF ACTION TAKEN.

16—62014-1 U. S. GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE

popular consultation was due not to PSC gain but to vote of Liberals and other elements which in a national election would be identified with different parties than PSC.

3. [redacted] if problem was B-1
we be solved "decision must be taken within a week". Since he is close to Van Leemand and latter is now counseling King we regard this remark as significant.

[redacted] B-1

5. [redacted] Leopold would undoubtedly B-1
transfer his residence to Belgium in the near future.

[redacted]

EGC:MW

DIVISION OF COMMUNICATIONS AND RECORDS
TELEGRAPH BRANCH

DEPARTMENT OF STATE

INCOMING TELEGRAM

ACTION COPY

EXCISE

(OVER)

CONFIDENTIAL

5-M

Action: EUR
Info:
GS
G
E
P
OLI
CIA
AAN
OCL
IE
OCR

Control 7738

Rec'd March 16, 1950
3:08 p.m.

C855

FROM: Brussels

TO: Secretary of State

NO: 424, March 16, 6 p.m.

SENT DEPARTMENT 424, REPEATED LONDON 106, PARIS 106 FOR OSR.

FGTB regional leaders, convoked by Major and Debock, meet this afternoon to choose selected plants in every province where protest strikes of limited duration against possibility of Leopold return will be set off beginning March 17. These strikes will be started even before Leopold decision is known because; [redacted]

(1) country and, particularly, PSC must realize large percentage of population continues to feel strongly against Leopold. First reaction of population to consultation results indicated Leopold would not return, but this belief now being vitiated by continuing clamor in Catholic press.

(2) Liberals, upon whom fate of King may depend must be subjected to prompt counter-pressure [redacted]

FGTB strikes will be concentrated primarily in Wallonia but will also occur in Antwerp and Ghent. [redacted] will be ignored as lacking suitable anti-Leopold feeling. Public utilities and trams in all areas will not be included in strike plans in attempt not to antagonize public. Strikes are being planned to break on unsuspecting country without preliminary buildup. FGTB hopes they will assume character of spontaneous

demonstrations

CONFIDENTIAL

LIAISON OFFICE

755.00/3-1650
DC/R Central Files

CONFIDENTIAL FILE

MAR 21 1950

HH

PERMANENT RECORD COPY: THIS COPY MUST BE RETURNED TO DC/R CENTRAL FILES WITH NOTATION OF ACTION TAKEN.

16—52913-1 U. S. GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE

demonstrations against King on local plant level, thus avoiding all appearance of orchestration from national or even regional levels.

[redacted] has indicated he will not participate in regional meeting, thus giving rise to belief he may be planning independent action in keeping with his dramatic and unpredictable character. B-1

Yob uncertain whether Finet has been informed of plans since he is occupied full time in ICFTU meetings.

MURPHY

MSH:MEW